

COMMENTS FROM THE NEW EDITOR

The CANADIAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION has grown over the past eight years as the discipline of Communication has developed in this country. The weaknesses of the Journal are, I believe, attributable to the weaknesses of the discipline of Communication in Canada. Our discipline is slowly developing in this country. Until three years ago there was no organization to give it focus or to bring us all together. Communication studies were being conducted under many rubrics with research being published in many different learned journals. If the Journal has had an identity crisis it is because there has been no single orientation which could focus the discipline in Canada.

I do not want to compare the Journal with any of the U.S. journals although our critics often do this. However some comparison may be instructive to us. The Speech Communication Association publishes three journals, soon to be increased to four with a new mass communication journal, several yearbooks and is supportive of the four regional journals in communication. SPEECH MONOGRAPHS published by S.C.A. accepts empirical research studies broadly covering all aspects of communication: interpersonal, small group, intercultural, mass communication, and organizational communication. THE QUARTERLY JOURNAL OF SPEECH, the oldest S.C.A. journal, publishes philosophical, theoretical and rhetorical analyses of communication. Again there is a broad perspective covering the many different areas of the discipline. Their third journal, COMMUNICATION EDUCATION, focuses upon theory and methods for teaching communication. Since they have three journals along with the Intercultural and Free Speech, yearbooks, the journals of S.C.A. can specialize.

The regional journals--COMMUNICATION TODAY (Eastern), CENTRAL STATES JOURNAL OF SPEECH, JOURNAL OF SOUTHERN SPEECH, and WESTERN JOURNAL OF SPEECH COMMUNICATION, must compete with the three S.C.A. journals and the two I.C.A. journals. They suffer because scholars prefer to publish in the national journals which give them greater status and prestige. The regional journals have in the past few years become quite competitive with especially the Eastern and Western journals publishing issues focusing upon communication theory and methodology.

Our situation, seems to me, to be somewhat analogous to that of the regional journals in the U.S. Canadian scholars also perceive greater status and prestige from publishing in I.C.A. or S.C.A. journals thus relegating the Canadian journal to a lower position. During the past two years excellent articles reporting Canadian research and focusing upon Canadian issues have been published in THE JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION, COMMUNICATION RESEARCH, THE JOURNAL OF BROADCASTING, and JOURNALISM QUARTERLY. These are the prestige journals in our field because of their age, the editors who have served them, and their linkage with international associations. Yet twelve years ago editors of THE JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION were pleading at I.C.A. meetings for communication scholars to publish in communication journals and not the "prestige" journals in Psychology or Sociology. I vividly recall sessions at S.C.A. and I.C.A. in which the topic of discussion was, "Why are communication scholars not publishing in communication journals?" Perhaps we should hold a session at C.C.A. on why Canadian scholars publish in U.S. journals and not Canadian journals. We need a commitment from Canadian scholars to make Canadian journals the prestige publications in Canada.

The other problem which we have is that there

are only two Canadian journals in communication. We do not have the luxury of specialization! Over the past eight years Earle has published theoretical and empirical articles in mass communication. That policy will continue during the next few years. Some reviewers of this Journal in the past have called for more empirical research articles to appear in the Journal. They base this assumption upon the strict empiricism of U.S. communication journals such as HUMAN COMMUNICATION RESEARCH. Anyone who reads widely in communication theory will realize that the empirical tradition is under attack from scholars in our discipline, especially in Canada, and even in the United States. If we are to help in the development of Canadian Communication Theory we cannot limit ourselves to a strict North American empiricism.

Let there be no doubt in anyone's mind that this is a scholarly journal seeking to serve the development of Communication Studies in Canadian Universities. Yet we have been so conditioned to the United States variety of scholarly journal filled with empirical research studies that it is hard for us to conceive of a journal which prints articles of a philosophical or analytical nature next to empirical research studies. The Editor of this journal is committed to a policy of providing a forum for both types of articles. This does not mean we have an identity crisis! It means that the discipline of Communication as it has developed in Canada is different from the discipline as it has developed in the United States. In future issues we shall attempt to delineate these differences.

We are a Journal associated with the Canadian Communication Association. The Canadian Communication Association is not as broad in scope as S.C.A. or I.C.A. There are separate organizations here for theatre, rhetoric, media history whereas in the U.S. these groups meet together.

We have had a hard time organizing programs on interpersonal communication at C.C.A. meetings. There are scholars in Canada interested in intercultural communication but they focus their energies upon the Society for Intercultural Education, Teaching and Research (SIETRA).

The Canadian Communication Association is essentially an organization of mass communication scholars. This limitation in scope within the organization may also limit the type of material which is available for publication in our Journal. In the future I hope that this Journal can publish manuscripts in all areas of communication theory and research as these areas of the discipline mature in Canada.

Earle Beattie has given this Journal a strong foundation upon which to build for the future. Eight years ago he envisioned a journal which would serve both the media scholar and the media professional. In the meantime the discipline of communication matured in this country and the journal began serving this group of scholars. It is my intention as the new editor to continue developing the Journal in a manner which will facilitate the development of our discipline.

From the title page you will have noted that some things are being done to establish the Journal on a stronger financial base. We have begun to incorporate the Journal as a non-profit corporation. The Board of Directors will be chosen on a national basis. They will have the responsibility of overseeing the work of the Journal Editor, establishing a financial base for the Journal, and guaranteeing the continuity of this publication. The Editorial Board will also be a national body which will advise the Editor, referee articles for publication, and help the Editor to meet his or her objectives for the Journal. Dr. Akira Ichikawa, of the University of Lethbridge, has

agreed to become the Book Review Editor for the Journal,

Beginning with the next issue we will publish an abstract in each official language for every article. We will also be publishing more information about the background of each author. In the past it has been impossible to know if the author was an established scholar or a new scholar beginning work in the field. We have also determined to allow minimal advertising in the Journal from Departments of Communication across the country and book publishers who have Canadian books to announce. This will allow persons who are just developing an interest in communication to know where the programs are located.

I would like to publish some theme issues focusing upon major areas of concern to communication scholars. If you would like to serve as guest editor for such an issue please contact me at the address above. I would also like to publish one issue which features articles by Graduate students in communication from across the country. If you have suggestions for the improvement of the Journal or would like to serve as a referee please let me know. Together we can help the CANADIAN JOURNAL OF COMMUNICATION become the prestige Journal in our discipline in this country.

E.D.T.